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CHESTERFIELD COUNTY

Planning Commission's Annual Report



TOC

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Introduction

01

Message from the 2018 Planning Commission Chairman

It is my pleasure to present the 2018 Annual Report of the Chesterfield County Planning Commission. Pursuant to Virginia Code Section 15.2-2221, it is the duty of the Planning Commission to make an annual report to the Board of Supervisors concerning the operation of the Commission and the status of planning in Chesterfield County.

It has been my honor to serve as the Commission's Chairman for 2017 and 2018. I appreciate the hard work and collaboration the Commissioners have shown in performing their responsibilities. The Planning Commission has been productive this past year by:

- Completing the Comprehensive Plan Update through the course of six special work sessions and a joint meeting with the Board
- Advising the Planning Department on a new zoning review process
- Attending numerous community meetings to solicit the public's perspective on rezoning cases, the Comprehensive Plan, and other land development related matters
- Developing innovative methods to implement comprehensive and special area plans

This report summarizes some of the important land use related work performed by the Planning Commission and the Planning Department.

I hope you find this report helpful. We continue to encourage public engagement as we attempt to provide our best service to Chesterfield County.



Gib Sloan

Planning Commission Responsibilities

The Chesterfield County Planning Commission is composed of five members, one member for each of the county's magisterial districts (Bermuda, Clover Hill, Dale, Matoaca, and Midlothian). Commission members are appointed by the Board of Supervisors to serve a four year term with a chairperson appointed annually by the Commissioners.

The Planning Commission is charged with the following responsibilities:

- Make recommendations on revisions, updates, and adoption of Comprehensive Plan
- Make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding applications for conditional use permits, zoning changes, and conditional use planned development permits.
- Advise Board of Supervisors on proposed amendments to the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances
- Advise the Board of Supervisors on other relevant issues regarding development of the county

01

Introduction

Meet Your Planning Commissioners



Michael Jackson

2019 Chair

Dale District

Professionally, Mr. Jackson is a Certified Fraud Examiner and has experience as a fiscal health care consultant. He has volunteered for the Special Olympics, and as a Little League baseball coach, and as an Education Advocate. He also served on the Chesterfield County Citizens Cash Proffer Committee and has received training from the Virginia Certified Planning Commissioner Program. He served as Vice Chair of the Commission this past year and began service as its Chairman beginning in January 2019.



Gloria Freye, JD, CPC

2019 Vice Chair

Clover Hill District

Mrs. Freye is a highly recognized attorney with more than 26 years in private practice. Prior to her retirement in 2015, she handled a wide variety of land use, zoning, and commercial real estate transactions. Her areas of concentration included zoning, permitting and development of residential, office, commercial, and industrial properties. As an ABA-trained mediator, her skills greatly enhance her ability to work with the community and developers to build consensus and resolve details associated with proposed land development applications. Mrs. Freye is a Certified Planning Commissioner and also serves as the Planning Commission representative on the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission Board.

Robert "Peppy" Jones

Midlothian District

Mr. Jones has been an active participant in the community throughout his adult life. He has 40 years' experience in the construction industry and formerly served as the Executive Director of the Mid-lothian Mines and Rail Roads Foundation. He has also served on the Village of Midlothian Volunteer Coalition Board since its inception. He is a founding member of the Chesterfield Historical Society and served on boards for the YMCA, Lucy Corr Foundation, and Bon Secours Hospital.



Gib Sloan

Bermuda District

Mr. Sloan served as Chair of the Commission in 2017 and 2018. He works in financial investments and is a lifelong resident of the County. He previously served as the Chairman on the Chesterfield County Community Services Board and also served on the Sustain our Community Committee. Mr. Sloan completed all course work for credentials as a Certified Planning Commissioner.

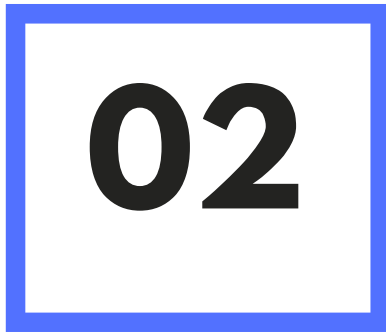


Craig Stariha

Matoaca District

Mr. Stariha has served on the Commission for a little over a year. He holds an undergraduate degree from Iowa Wesleyan University and an MBA from Averett University. Mr. Stariha worked at Altria for more than 31 years before retiring in 2012. He has been a citizen of Chesterfield County since 1980. Mr. Stariha brings a strong financial background to his appointment to the Planning Commission.





Demographic Indicators

Demographic Indicators are important factors that assist the Commission in assessing current and future needs and services

County Highlights



+1.1% population increase

Chesterfield County's population was estimated to be 344,000 as of January 1, 2018.



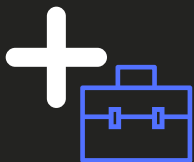
38.8 years old median age

The County's population is growing older with the increase of the 65 and over population. This age group grew 5.6 percent between 2016 and 2017, which outpaces the growth of all other age groups.



1/3 of households have children

As of 2017, there were 120,907 households in the county. 65% of these households did not have children.



+1.3% job growth

As of the third quarter of 2018, there were 137,861 jobs in the county. This was an increase of 1.4 percent or 1,908 new jobs from the third quarter in 2017. In 2017, there were 177,184 employed county residents, accounting for a two percent increase in the number of employed residents since 2016.



\$257,000 median sales price

The housing market remained strong in 2018 with a three percent increase in the median sales price compared to 2017. There were 6,244 housing units sold, a minimal change when compared to 2017 sales. The majority of units sold consisted of existing single-family homes.



\$76,969 median household income

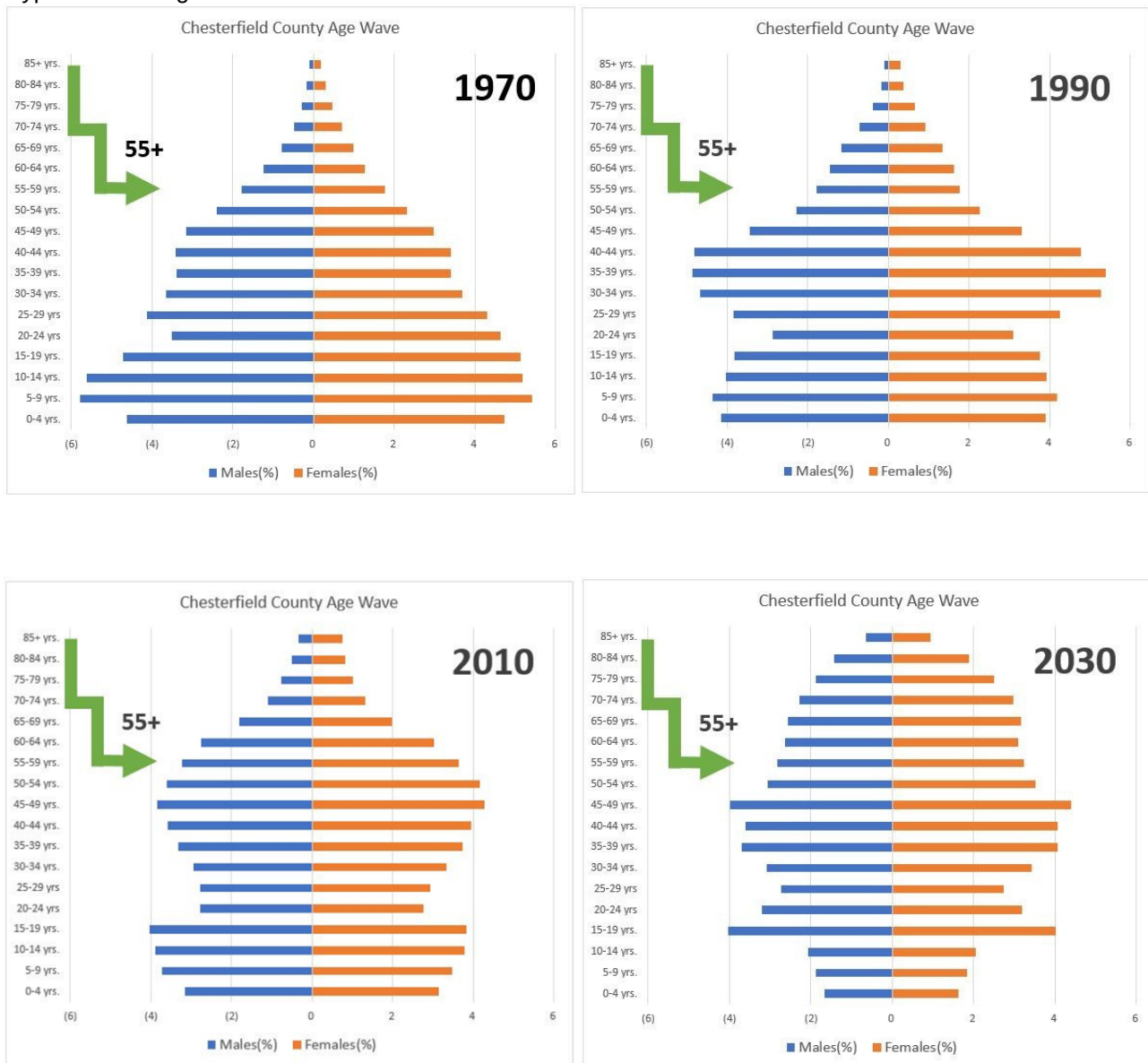
As of 2017, Chesterfield County has the fifth highest median household income in the Richmond region. When adjusting for inflation, there was very minimal change in household income since 2016.

Demographic Indicators

02

Age Wave

The graphs below illustrate the growth of the population over age 55, occurring as the Baby Boomer enters late adulthood. The population graphs illustrate what percentage of Chesterfield residents fall into five year age groups. Each group is a small cohort of same-age peers. Over time, the population surviving into the late 70's is growing with the pyramid shifting into a pillar form. The Age Wave has huge implications on the types of housing and services that will be needed.



03

Development Trends

Residential Trends

Residential Permits Issued Per Year

In 2018, a total of 1,758 residential certificate of occupancy permits were issued. This was a decrease of four percent from 2017. Single family units continue to account for most new residential units being built (Chart 1).

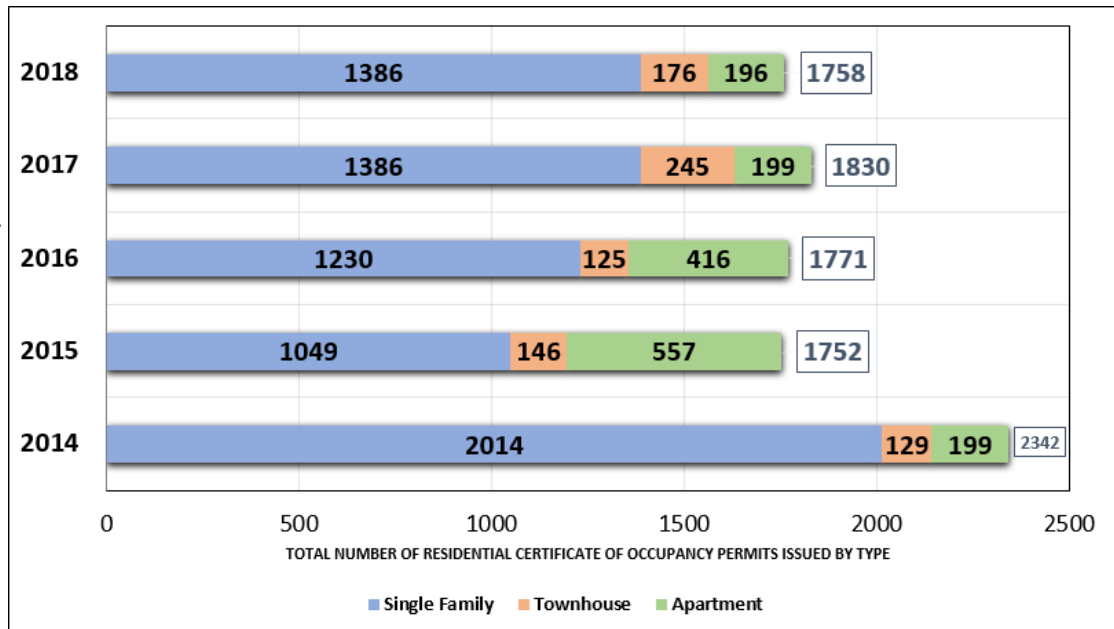
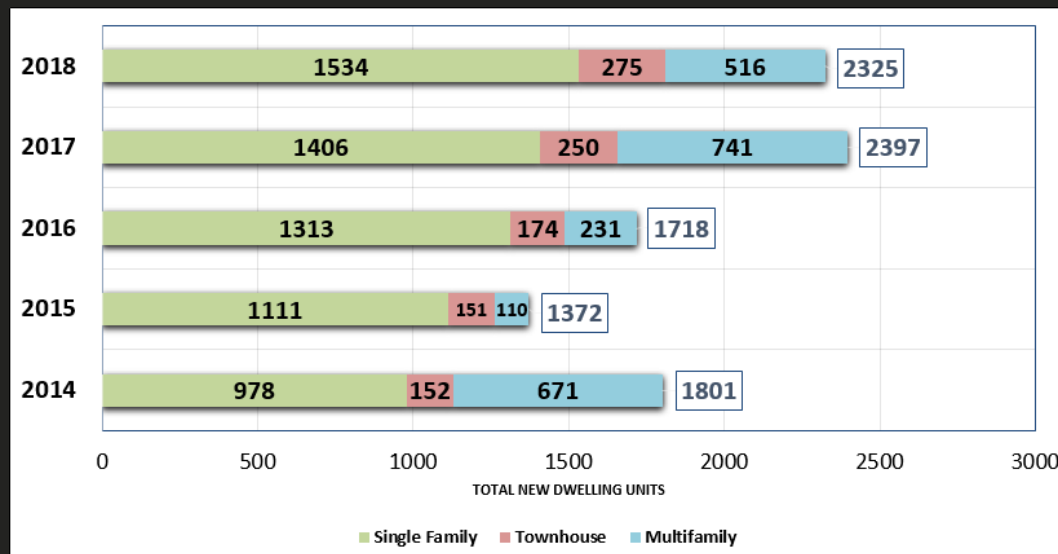


Chart 1

Built Residential Units Per Year



In 2018, a total of 2,325 residential units were built. This was a decrease of three percent from 2017. Single family units continue to account for most new residential units being built. There was a nine percent increase in single family units built. Compared to 2017, 22% of the new units built in 2018 were multifamily. However, this was a decline of 30% compared to 2017 (Chart 2).

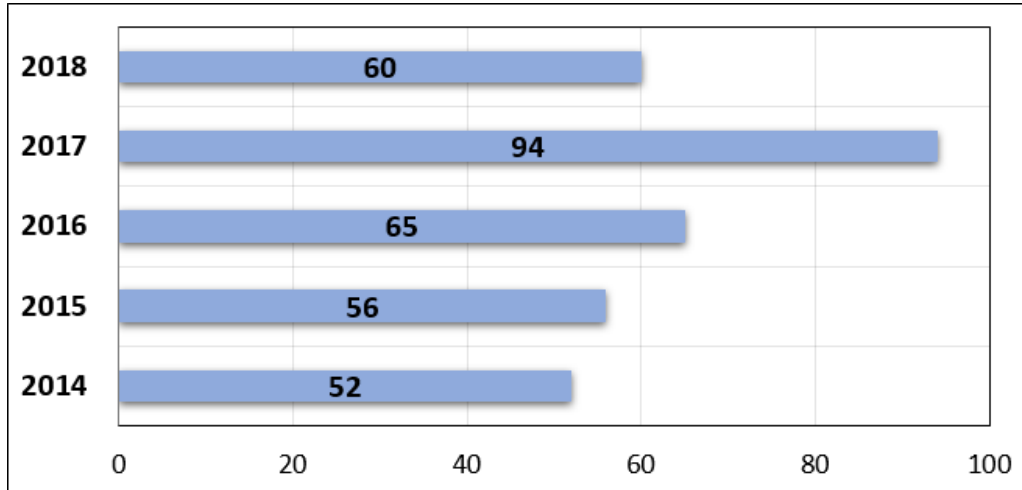
Chart 2

Development Trends

03

Non-Residential Trends

Non-Residential Permits Issued Per Year



In 2018, approximately 60 non-residential (commercial, office, or industrial) permits were issued. This was a decrease of 36% from 2017 (Chart 3).

Chart 3

Built Non-Residential Square Footage Per Year

In 2018, approximately 591,755 square feet of non-residential development occurred. This was a decrease of 33% from 2017. While there was an overall increase in new square footage of both commercial and office, there was a decline of 75% in new industrial square footage built in 2018 when compared with 2017 development (Chart 4).

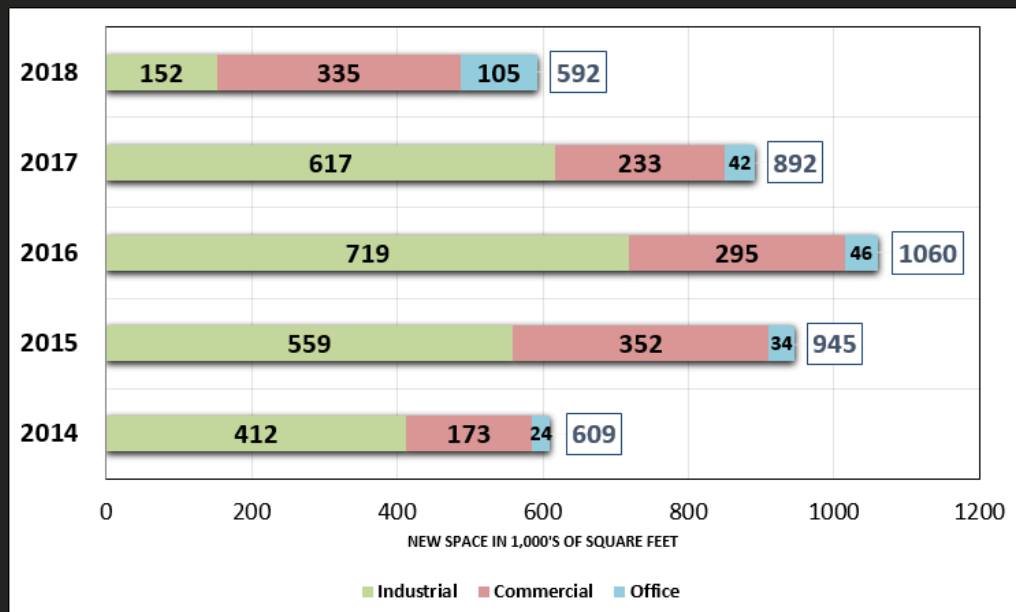


Chart 4

04

Planning Commission Activities & Highlights

Zoning Applications & Actions

Total Zoning Applications Submitted Per Year

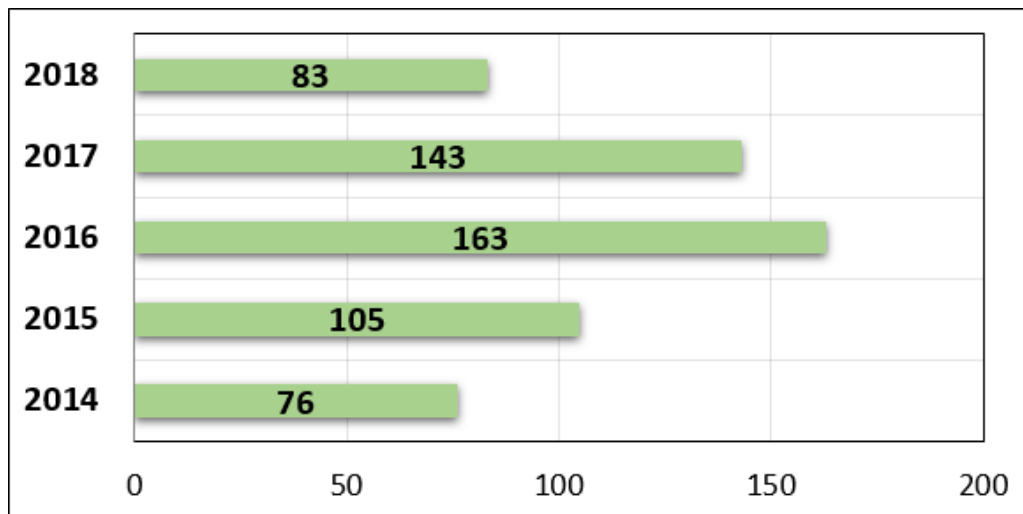


Chart 5

In 2018, the Planning Department received a total of 83 new zoning related applications as depicted in Chart 5. These applications represent cases entering the review process. Not all of the 2018 caseload was mature enough to be heard by the Planning Commission in 2018. Many of these new submittals will be heard in 2019 by the Commission.

Summary of Zoning Applications Receiving an Action by the Planning Commission

Chart 6 shows the total number of individual actions performed by the Planning Commission per year on various types of zoning applications. For example, if rezoning "X" appeared on the Planning Commission's agenda on three separate occasions during 2018, that counts as three actions performed by the Commission on that case for that year. The total number of case actions for 2018 is 176, representing a 37% decrease from the previous year. In large part this decrease in volume is attributed to fewer amendments to cash proffers.

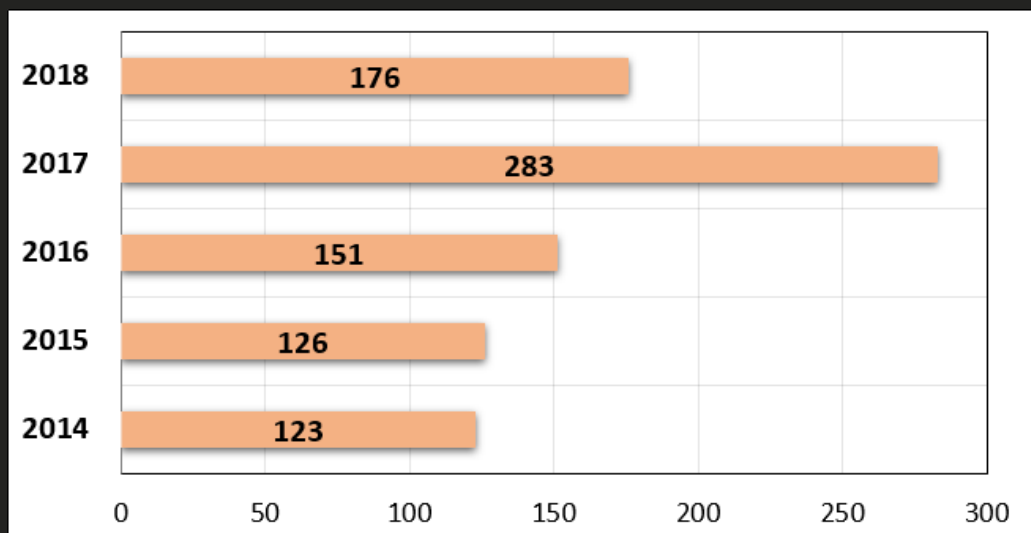
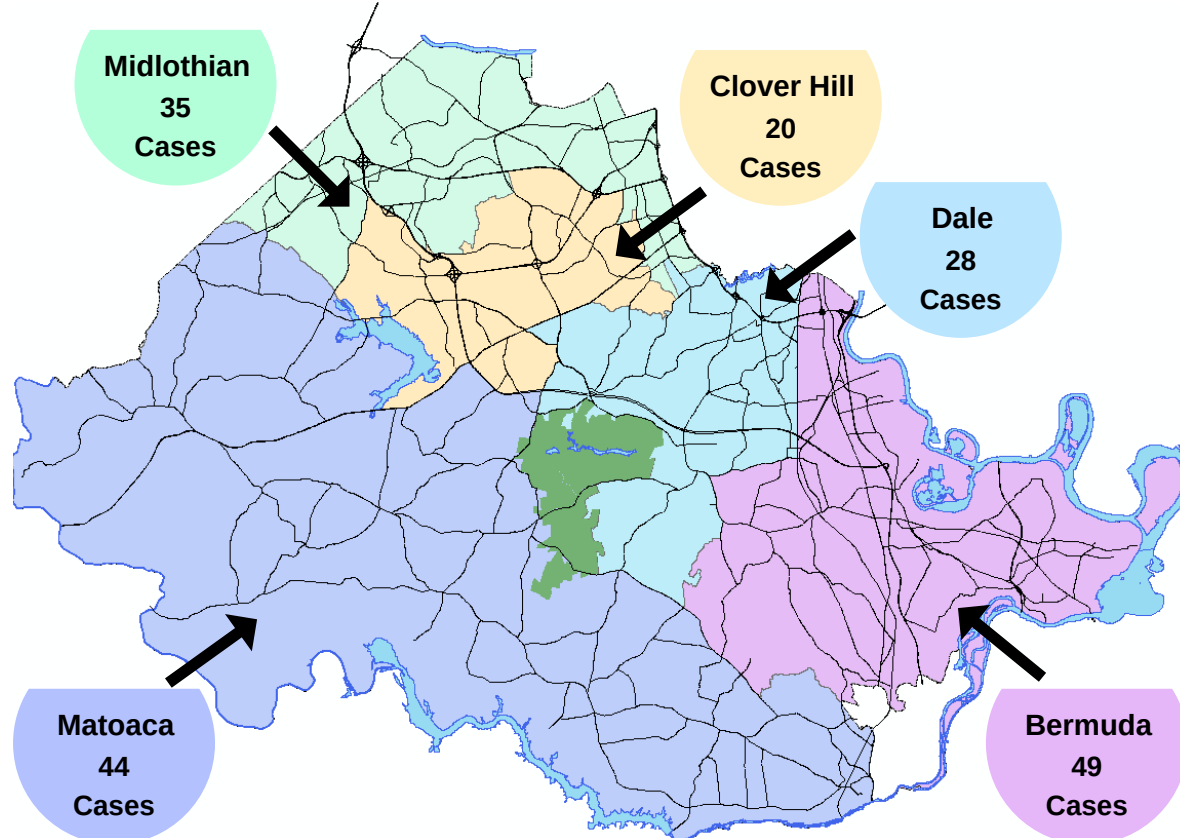
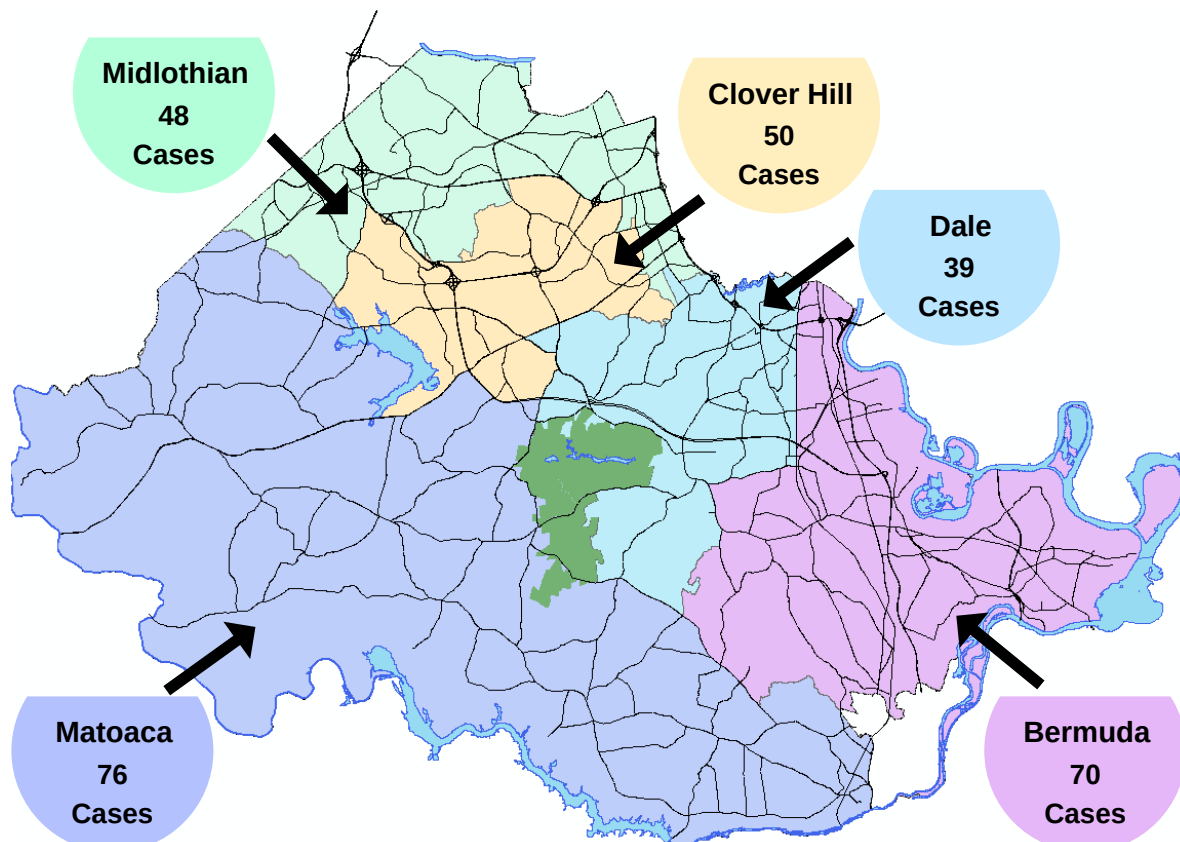


Chart 6

Zoning Cases Acted Upon by Magisterial District 2018



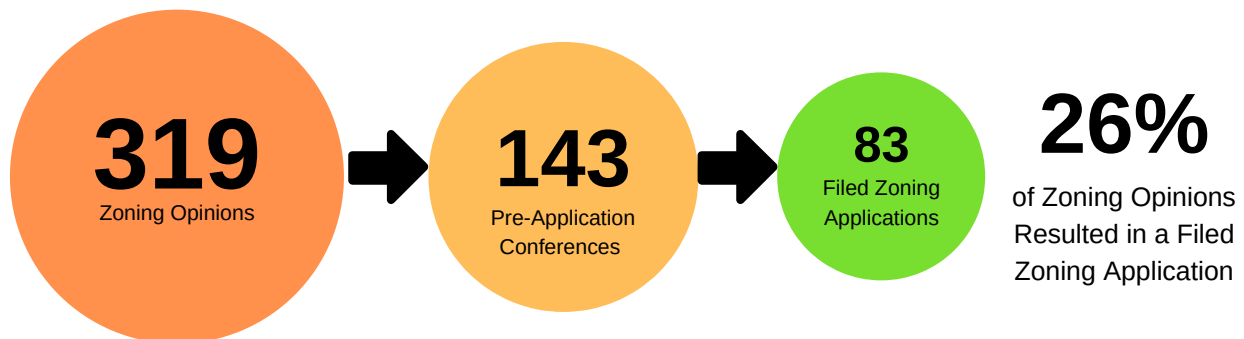
Zoning Cases Acted Upon by Magisterial District 2017





Planning Commission Activities & Highlights

Planning Commission
& Staff Workload for 2018



Planning Commissioners and Staff Attended:



Planning Commission Approved Two Substantial Accord Determinations:



Harrowgate Elementary School Replacement



Harrowgate Park Replacement

Planning Commission Activities & Highlights

04

Subdivision & Site Plan Applications

**Number of Subdivision and Site Plans Requiring Action
by the Planning Commission**

Chart 7 shows the number of subdivision and site plans that require Planning Commission action as may be required by zoning conditions and appeals.

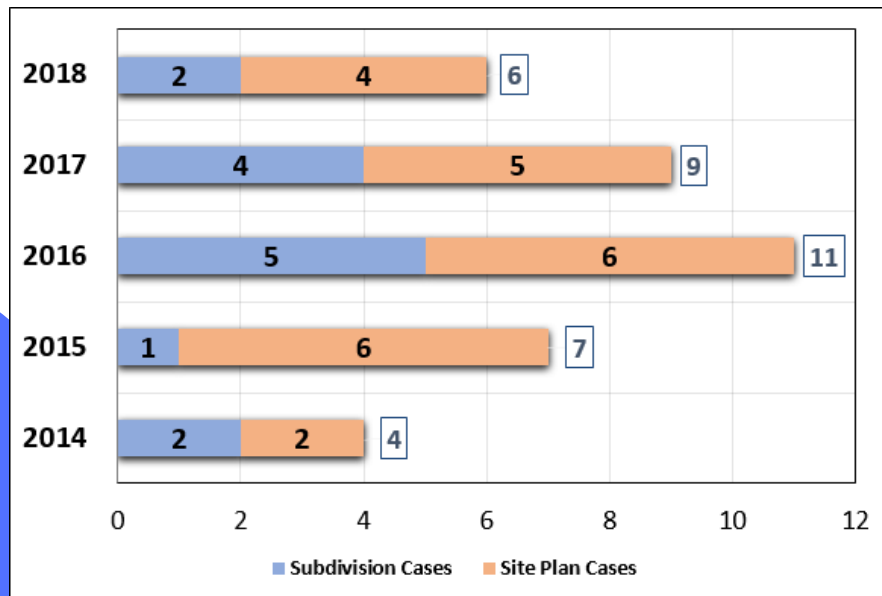


Chart 7

6
Site Plan &
Subdivision
Cases went to
the
Commission

**Total Subdivision / Site Plan Applications Accepted
into Review Process**

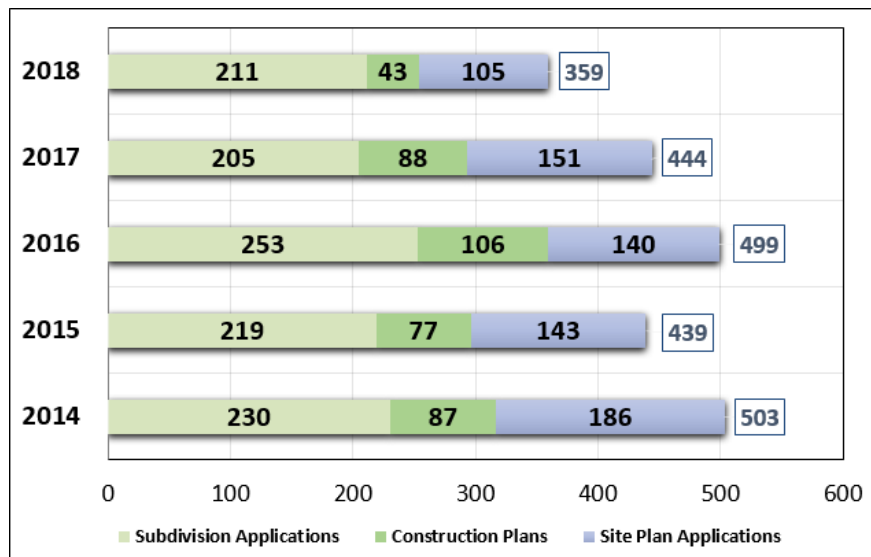


Chart 8

Chart 8 shows the total number of cases for subdivision and site plans accepted into the system for review. The majority of these cases are reviewed and acted upon administratively once they have met all ordinances, conditions, and policies.

359
Site Plan &
Subdivision
Cases were
submitted



Planning Commission Activities & Highlights

Code Amendments

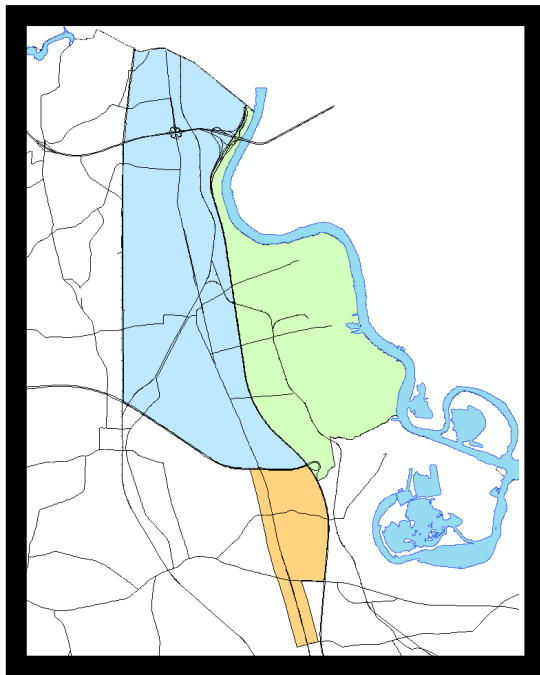
Adopted Ordinances

The Planning Commission and staff developed and recommended approval of three zoning ordinance amendments.

General Performance Criteria Fees Within Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas

This code amendment was part of considerations for the Fiscal Year 2019 budget. This fee was in part utilized to expand the ability for Environmental Engineering to maintain stormwater management \ best management practice (SWM/BMP) facilities.

Northern Jefferson Davis Highway Design Districts



A code amendment was adopted to implement the recommendations of the Northern Jefferson Davis Special Area Plan, relative to new design districts and boundaries.

Design District

**Northern Jefferson Davis
Highway**

Post Development Design District

**Eastern Jefferson Davis Highway
Corridor**

Post Development Design District

**Central Jefferson Davis Highway
Corridor**

Resource Protection Area Designation For Line Modification Plats

This amendment provided that the director of Environmental Engineering may grant a waiver to the Resource Protection Area Designation (RPAD) for line modification plats. The director may do so when it's determined that there is sufficient evidence to suggest environmental features do not exist on a resulting parcel or the proposed modification is unlikely to affect the buildability of the resulting parcel. In such circumstances the final plat shall have a notification that required information regarding RPA (resource protection area) or other environmental features has not been done and would need to be finalized prior to a future building permit or property division. Further, it would notify the owner or future owners that such features may affect lot buildability. A similar provision is also required to be recorded as a deed restriction on the parcel.

Planning Commission Activities & Highlights

04

Code Amendments Continued

Ongoing Work

Signs

A proposed code amendment would modify various building mounted and freestanding sign provisions. In addition, the proposal includes the allowance of computer controlled variable message electronic signs (EMC) as a restricted use and limited removal of the prohibition on Outdoor Advertising signs provided new standards are met.

Zoning Applications

This code amendment would provide that application for Rezoning, Conditional Use, or Conditional Use Planned Development include a layout plan. Such layout plan will include information to assist staff in evaluation of such application.

Zoning Violation Fines

Based upon changes to State code, fines that may be imposed by a court related to violations of the Zoning Ordinance has been proposed to be amended. The changes include an elimination of the minimum fine that could be imposed and the establishment of a graduated fine structure that would have a maximum of \$2000.

Fencing & Walls

A proposal to amend the standards required for fencing and walls in residential districts is in progress. Among the proposed elements are the permitting of an increase in height within corner yards based upon certain restrictions and a requirement that materials used in fences be those marketed and designed for such a use. In addition, the amendment provides standards for recreational fencing and retaining walls.

Solar Farms

The amendment would provide that solar power generation be permitted with restrictions within all districts where the power generation is designed to serve only the property on which equipment is located. The amendment also provides for limited power generation and distribution on a farm in Agricultural (A) districts based upon state code provisions. For industrial districts the amendment would, with restrictions, permit production of power for onsite consumption or distribution provided that the area of solar power generation does not exceed two acres, excluding roof mounted facilities. In addition the amendment would provide for large scale solar power generation for wholesale distribution as a conditional use in Agricultural districts. The amendment would provide standards for such facilities that would, among other things, guide design, decommissioning, and zoning request for such a use.

04

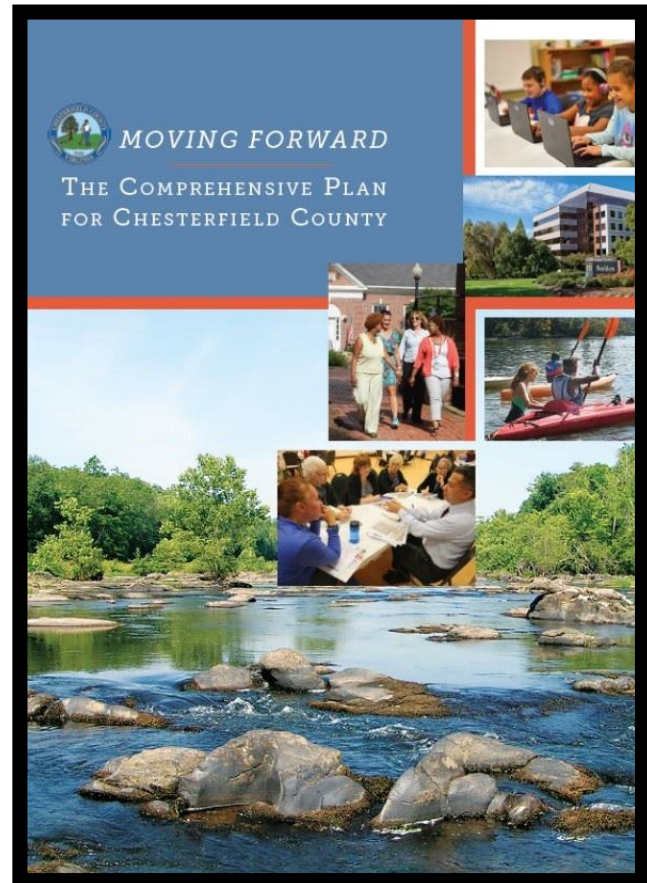
Planning Commission Activities & Highlights

Long Range Plans

Comprehensive Plan Update

The Commission has continued to develop this project, including holding a joint meeting with the Board of Supervisors in October, and overseeing extensive community engagement throughout the fall of 2018. This outreach effort was supplemented by an extensive social media campaign with video segments to further inform the community of this effort. The social media effort alone reached over 31,000 persons and resulted in nearly 1,300 links to the project web page where more information is contained. After making further revisions based upon this citizen input, the Commission is poised to vote on the draft plan update in early 2019.

9
Meetings
Conducted for
Comprehensive
Plan Update



Midlothian Village Special Area Plan

Staff continues to work with the Commission and Board members from this area to draft recommendations guiding the future growth and development of the community. Staff anticipates community outreach on the draft plan in 2019, followed by Commission and Board public hearings.

Northern Jefferson Davis Special Area Plan & Implementation

The Commission recommended the Northern Jefferson Davis SAP to the Board in February 2018 and the Board unanimously adopted the plan in April 2018. This is the county's first modern revitalization plan and has been followed by an extensive implementation effort. Under the direction of Mr. Sloan, an implementation steering committee comprised of staff, citizens, and private and non-profit developers has been meeting to work on various efforts to help the plan's vision become a reality. This group will continue to work and meet throughout 2019.



Planning Process Improvements

Zoning

05

One of the biggest changes in 2018 was the reexamination of the zoning process and a determination of what improvements were warranted. The new review process clearly establishes standardized steps where staff will expeditiously perform its review. Staff will work with the applicant, the community, and the Planning Commission to resolve case issues, and ultimately work to get zoning applications through the review process as quickly as possible. Planning Director, Andrew G. Gillies, has presented the process, shown below, on several occasions to the development community, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors.

Zoning Process Steps

1. Submit Request

Process starts with an applicant's desire to use their property

2. Staff Review (Zoning Opinion) (1 Week from Step 1)

Planning staff reviews applicant request at high level to provide general feedback to applicant

3. Pre-Application Meeting (Within 3 Weeks from Step 1)

Applicant and staff meet to discuss request and what information to provide on application

4. Submit Application

Applicant submits application and pays fee

5. Detailed Staff Review at Technical Review Committee (TRC) (Within 2 Weeks from Step 4)

Staff from several departments review application in detail to provide feedback and issues to applicant; applicant responds to staff comments

6. Hold Community Meeting (Within 4 Weeks from Step 5, depending on complexity of case)

Applicant arranges community meeting with staff for public review of request; a sign is posted on the property

7. Public Hearings (Within 6 Weeks from Step 6)

Staff develops report on request; applicant attends public hearings at Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors who determine outcome of case

***Note: Timeframes are approximate and may vary depending on applicant responsiveness and/or complexity of request**

06

Achievements & Recognition

Virginia Association of Counties 2018 Achievement Award



Chesterfield County's Department of Communications and Media and the Planning Department collaborated for a community outreach effort about the Northern Jefferson Davis Special Area Plan. Community involvement is important in any effort of this scope, but especially in the Northern Jefferson Davis area – 13.5 square miles along Jefferson Davis Highway – one of the county's oldest and most important highways, which has some of the county's densest population diversity.

Outreach focused on meeting people where they were: in their neighborhood, Latino-owned business, during civic group meetings, at community centers and schools, and even on school buses. The county laid out a comprehensive communications strategy to increase citizen understanding of the planning process and ensure maximum citizen participation in the plan.

07

Zoning Enforcement

Statistics

Zoning Enforcement Workload

In 2018, our Zoning Enforcement Staff:



Worked 1,109
Cases



Average of 3.29 Days to Respond
to a Complaint with an Inspection



Removed 6,784
Signs



Average of 17.94 Days to Close a
Complaint

Challenges & Opportunities

08

For 2019

Based on input from the citizens, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors, the following is a list of challenges and opportunities for the Planning Department:



New Zoning Ordinance

Although there have been several amendments to the document, the existing Zoning Ordinance is several decades old and will be examined to determine how it should be revised.



Site Plan & Subdivision Process Improvements

The department will explore ways to improve both processes to help the team perform at top efficiency and expeditiously.



New Workload & Performance Metrics

Through the County-wide and department Strategic Plan, the department will be developing performance measures to improve efficiency and management tools for its team leaders.



Improvements to Public Engagement

Planning, Information Systems Technology (IST), and the Communications and Media Departments have been working together for several months to enhance its public communication skills using innovative tools and techniques. The team has been exploring different social media tools and public engagement programs.



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